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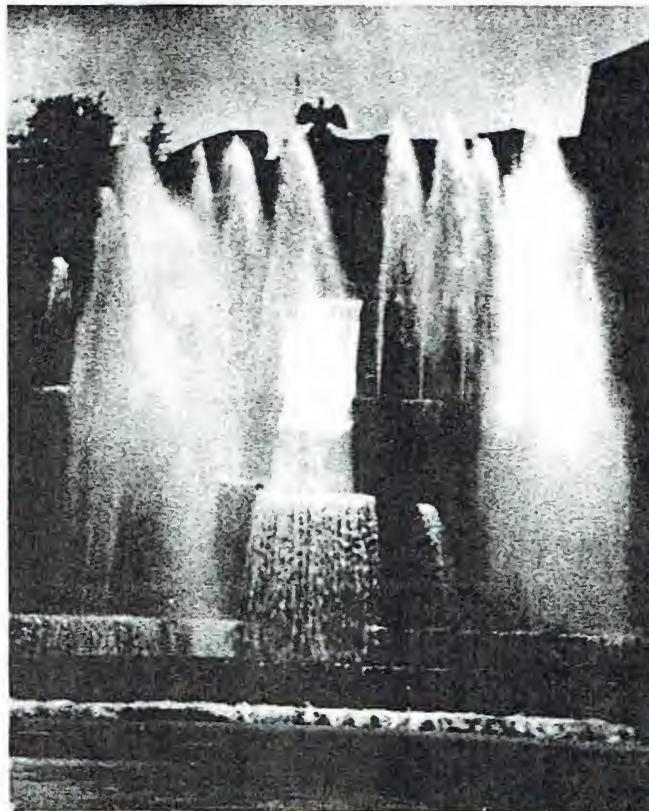
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Fountains at Tivoli, Villa d' Este

Photo by Rose Dawn

... I will give unto him that is athirst of
the fountain of the water of life freely.
Revelations: 21-6

THE MAXIMUM LIVING SERIES
Mayan Revelation Number 180
BREAK THE FEAR BARRIER

The Sound Barrier

The Thing I Feared

Consider Fear

How to Overcome Fear

Old Fears Exploded

Three Echoes

Phantoms of the Mind

Meditation

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but
of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

-- II Tim. 1:7

Beloved Centurion:

One of our great Presidents made a true statement when he said, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." Very often when we fear a thing we attract to ourselves the very thing we fear most. One of the most destructive characteristics of fear is that when we have a great problem which we must try to work out and which is causing us great anxiety, the fear of the result of this condition makes it almost impossible for us to think and act constructively in trying to work it out. Fear tears down, it destroys.

As you read these words, I can hear many of you say, "Yes, I know that often illness, despondency, failure in business, failure to hold a job, mental ailments, growing old too soon, are all the results of fear. But how does one go about overcoming fear? It is easy to say, 'Don't be afraid', but tell me how to stop fearing."

Well, my Beloved Companions, in this lesson your Instructor has given you something to do, an actual remedy that works, and if you will do exactly as I tell you I feel that I can make you a promise - YOU WILL BE ABLE TO OVERCOME FEAR. If it doesn't work for you the first time you do it, KEEP DOING IT EVERY DAY UNTIL IT DOES WORK, for it will banish fear from your life. IT IS ENTIRELY UP TO YOU.

There are countless thousands of people suffering from fear thoughts. My work through the years has brought and is bringing me in contact with these sufferers from fear. It is like a disease and it definitely can keep one from achieving the heights. It sends thousands of people to psychiatrists and doctors every year all over the country - all because people are lacking in the knowledge of this one great truth which I have set forth for you in the following pages.

I am going to look forward with great interest to the letters I will receive from those of you who are in this class. If you do suffer from fear thoughts, I am so eager that you try my exercise, which I have given to you in the last part of this lesson and that you put it to work faithfully and earnestly, for I know what it can do for you if you will cooperate.

The following prayer will help you to apply your instructions. I think it is a beautiful prayer; may it inspire you to get rid of all fear. It is my hope that your fountain of life will be as abundant, as sparkling, and as beautiful as the fountains which we have pictured for you on the front cover of this lesson.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I ask Thy help in overcoming all hindering fears

That may rise in the way of my progress.

Thou hast made all living things to unfold and grow.

Thou hast ordained that he who is right has nothing to fear.

Help me to write these truths on my heart,

And go forward in the confidence they inspire.

Amen

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THE SOUND BARRIER

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DEVELOPMENTS in aviation have brought us face to face with a new fear, and to a new instance in which experience has proved its needlessness. It came about with the development of the jet plane, that marvel of locomotion that climbs straight up into the air and goes roaring through the sky without benefit of propellers.

The jet plane moved so fast, and its possible speed was increasing at such a rate, that engineers working with it realized that a crisis was looming ahead. A little more progress and the jet would be flashing through the air at the speed of sound, and it was reasonable to suppose that before too long even that speed might be surpassed. What would happen then? There was fear that reaching the sound barrier point would wreck the plane, and that such a speed was too dangerous to attempt.

But man is a daring and adventurous creature. In time a flier high in the sky reached the speed of sound and passed it. There was a shock, but it was not fatal, nor particularly dangerous, either to plane or flier. Just the other day a birdman flew a jet about three minutes at a speed twice that of sound. Still nothing serious happened. Doubtless there are dangers in jet flying at such speeds, but passing through the sound barrier appears to be about the least of them.

Thus one more self-created threat collapsed. Another phantom of dread dissolved and disappeared. This happened because bold pioneers in the aviation field simply disregarded it. They did not permit it to obstruct their way. They went right ahead with their developments, and proved that what had been so much feared did not really exist.

The first person who ventured to smash through the so-called sound barrier took quite a chance. Theoretically the danger might be there, and thousands of feet above the ground is a poor place to find it out. But he found the supposed danger was not actual. It had grown largely from the fact that no one

had ever tried it before. It is natural to be afraid in the dark, and when light falls on the same spot the fear is gone.

But there are other barriers we set up in our imaginations, smashing through which would involve no physical dangers at least. No evil of any kind could come from daring them, only good because engaging them could not make matters worse and might make them better. It might even prove that no barrier was there in the first place, but only a mind-created phantom of terror. One of these is the barrier of fear, the fear of going forward, - the fear of trying new things.

There it stands ahead of us like a great, impenetrable wall. Imagination has made it a thing of dread, and the dread is all the worse because we do not know why we dread it. On the other side lurk dangers, like those Columbus was told he would find if he kept on sailing west; and, like him, when once we get on the other side we find there are no dragons there, but a new world of hope and possibility. It is being afraid in the dark. Experience will bring the light and banish the fear.

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CONSIDER FEAR

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ORMAL fear is a value and a blessing. The human glandular system is so constructed that it causes the feeling alarm when danger threatens. The remembered or possible experience of pain, loss, or disadvantage, causes us to be afraid to put ourselves in that particular jeopardy again. As the old saying goes, a burned child dreads the fire.

There is even a natural caution about taking uncertain steps, a caution that properly causes us to consider the wisdom of taking them and to weigh the possible benefits against the possible risks. These are normal mechanisms for self-protection. If they are properly used and not needlessly exaggerated they can add vastly to the safety and the good of living.

But fear can and does take forms as unreal as they are strange and dread. It is a vicious circle. Nervous conditions beget abnormal fears, and then the abnormal fears make the nervous conditions worse. People who are too much alone and people who tend to the pessimistic side conjure up fears that are terrible to live with - fears of lurking dangers and direful possibilities that can be conceived but that seldom or never happen, fears that make one so distraught and so disturbing to others that sometimes unfortunate things happen because of them. For instance, an overwrought back seat driver constantly crying out about things on the road never prevents half as many accidents as he causes.

Many people whose fears do not reach these extreme stages nevertheless have their peace of mind ruined and their lives impoverished by their fears. Instead of being cautious they become cowards fleeing from their shadows. They see and emphasize the unfavorable possibilities of an action, or a decision, or a journey, or a change, all in such exaggerated form that they crowd out all

possible consideration of the possible advantages. Life is always trying to pay off, and they refuse to let it do so because they do not trust the paymaster. The trust content, that vitamin of the soul, is low in their constitutions. They are the ones of little faith of whom the Master so often spoke.

The lives of these children of fear, made to be so rich, and full, and eager, and rewarding, never become much more than impoverished suggestions of what might have been. They are not even scrapheaps of failure. They are worse because they do not even have any failures to their credit. They were so afraid they would fail that they did not even so much as fail because they did not even try. They were not even as well off as the schoolboy who does not know the answer on examination, guesses at it, and gets at least one percent for trying. Once in a great while he stands a chance of guessing right. Those who make no attempt do not even stand that chance. There is a cost to the world because of those who never crash fear barriers, which do not even exist. There is a cost to them as well.

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OLD FEARS EXPLODED

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ONE night in June of 1910 the people of a certain city, like others almost everywhere, went to bed with great apprehension. They had been so fed with fear talk that they were uncertain whether they would rise again next morning, or whether the world would even be there in any form but a gas-withered waste or a burned-out cinder. That was the night they had been dreading for weeks.

After completing its seventy-six year orbit interval, Halley's Comet was again in our part of the universe. It had been visible for some time, coming nearer and growing brighter all the time. This time we were not going to escape as we always had before. The vast tail would extend right over the earth's orbit that night. We were bound to hit it head on. Some said we would be crushed in the collision, with masses of flying material. Others said we would be poisoned by lethal gas.

That night most people spent a little extra time at their prayers. Wearing such masks as they could devise many went to beds of unrest or waited on rooftops gazing at the awful luminous expanse in the sky. Next morning we all woke up as usual, and next night there was the fearsome comet tail on the other side of us. We had passed through it, but the substance was so thin it was less noticeable than passing through a very light cloud of dust, and if there had been any gas it was not enough to make any difference. We had been carried through the fear barrier without being able to help ourselves, and it had been nothing to worry about.

Many older people can still remember when the word gorilla was one of dread and terror. What we read about gorillas led us to believe that they were completely murderous, and that no one need ever expect to go near one and survive. That was, of course, when no one had ever tried it. We were afraid in the dark. Now we know that while a gorilla can be dangerous, many people have dealt agreeably

with them, and some have kept young gorillas in their homes for pets, finding that they respond very readily to understanding and kindness. When the light appears we cease to be afraid in the dark. Then we realize that we were afraid only of what we did not know.

The dweller in the African jungle or the American Indian was once regarded as an object of extreme terror. Today they have both been to college, and travel has so promoted world acquaintance that we are afraid in the dark no more. In a certain school, where a writer once taught, he found that the keenest mind he worked with belonged to a Seneca Indian, who also had the greatest capacity for friendship and loyalty. When his father would visit the school on special days he would easily be one of the most refined gentlemen there. That is another fear of darker days that time and acquaintance have swept away.

Think of the former horror at the thought of a crocodile or an alligator. Not long ago I saw a very obedient pet crocodile and we have all seen men safely wrestling with alligators. A thousand of the terrors of yesterday are terrors no longer. People found that when they just kept going the fear barrier disappeared. One of the messages of history is that there is nothing in the way that cannot be removed by those with courage, resourcefulness, faith, and persistence.

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PHANTOMS OF THE MIND

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HAT has been true of the physical fears has also been true of the mental ones. All kinds of fearsome phantoms have stood in the way of freedom to think, dream, plan, and go forward in the path of individual or group progress. They stand in the way of action and development like forbidding mountains of granite, and stop life's goings long before they need to stop by reason of time and capability. They attack self-confidence like a virus, and so weaken morale that their victims cannot go on. Among them are many wrong attitudes toward others and one especially wrong one toward the universe and the Creator. Its name is fear.

Fear has built up terrors in the human mind as damaging as those of comets' tails, savages, and wild beasts, all rolled into one. It has put bad relations between man and man, between man and his possibilities and, if such a thing is possible, between man and himself, at least his better self. We should long ago have come to rate fear as the poor thing it is, for it never produces anything but cowards. How are we to rate a thing that makes us afraid of our best friends, our best capabilities, our own shadows, even ourselves?

There comes a time in later life when people, looking back on earlier days more objectively than was then possible, say to themselves, "Why I could have had that", or "I could have done that." "If I had only realized it", they muse, "I could have made out as well as someone else. Why didn't I realize it? I guess I just didn't have the courage." Isn't that a pitiful conclusion to have to come

to after the day of life has grown late? Don't let it happen to you, or if it is happening, don't let it continue.

We have used the word "phantoms" at the head of this subtitle, because that is exactly what these fears are. They come out of nothing, and they return to nothing. They are so thin and tenuous that they have scarcely any reality at all. These feelings that keep us out of reach of the gates to our own best destinies are neither violent nor strong. We could push them out of the way if we were brave enough. They are just made of negativeness, nothing more. They are just attitudes with inner voices that say ever so softly, "Yes, that is fine, but it is not for me." Did you ever stop and ask why it is not for you? The only answer you could ever find, however long you searched, would be, "No reason. No reason at all."

So it is that we keep plodding along, shrinking back from phantoms, unreal imaginings and surrenders that keep us in the path of inferiority. But there is one fact that makes all this especially pitiful - the fact that we ourselves create the phantoms. They are fearsome things from which we flee, learning afterward or not at all that they were only scenery painted on a curtain, scenery that, without realizing what we were doing, we painted ourselves.

Whatever governments may be, life itself is a great democracy. Every person has a birthright to the best he can achieve in character, worth, and effectiveness. The road is open, and the gate is unlocked. The rest depends on him. No limitation of caste or accident of birth debars him. The only restriction on him is the limit of his own capacity and will. If he wants to surrender to his fears that is his own business, and if he does it that is his own fault. But it is not necessary.

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THE THING I FEARED

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pitiful voice rises from the pages of the Old Testament. It is that of a son of misfortune uttering the complaint, "The thing I feared is come upon me." This is more than a quick flash of anguished emotion. It lies much deeper than that. It is a fundamental principle of human experience. Just as faith and confidence tend to attract to themselves the objects of their hope, so fear tends to draw around us the very things we consciously dread.

Why, and how? One who could answer these questions would be one who could explain the riddle of life and the universe. It is one of the mysteries, but what does that matter? Most things are. You can observe the law whether you understand it or not. Just observe from your own experience and that of others that it is so, and be guided accordingly. That is all life, or truth either, will ask of you. There is more wisdom in keeping the law than in merely understanding it.

Here and there we can see a little of the workings of the law. For

instance, what effect does it have on you to discover that someone does not believe in you? Does it not tend to cause you no longer to care to justify his good opinion? Do you not see that unfaith begets unfaith? Or if you are afraid someone does not believe in you, do not the stars in the courses seem to work to make it so?

On the other hand, if someone does put faith in you, and you know it, does it not give you a desire to justify that faith? And if you do or do not believe in someone else, do you not soon find that person responding in kind? We find that as it is between ourselves and other people, so it is between us and our environments, between us and the universe. Whether we are looking for the best or the worst in people or the world, life sees that we are not disappointed.

In other words, what we look for is what we find. One man gazes at the beauty of a rose, one scents its perfume, and one feels for its thorns. Each finds what he is looking for. We all do in everything and every way. Have no confidence in life, and it will do as you expect. Believe in it, and it will delight to lay its gifts in your hands. Look for malevolence, and the thing you feared will come upon you. Trust life's goodness, and its good is yours.

"For life is a mirror for king or slave.

It's just what you are, and do.

Then give to the world the best you have,
And the best will come back to you."

That is why it is so important to make your eyes and your heart see everyone and everything, perhaps not as they are, but as their Creator made them to be. Friend, stranger, your loved ones, yourself - see all in God's perfect pattern. Act toward all accordingly, and they will tend to grow into that pattern. Be afraid they do not have in them to realize that pattern, and they will not rise to it, but will fall short of it. Whatever you expect of them, people and things will not disappoint you, so expect the best.

As you do this you will be blessed in your own life, for you will develop the habit of looking up, of believing in people and things, of looking for the best. What you fear or hope for, that you may expect.

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HOW TO OVERCOME FEAR

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ANY things probably help toward overcoming fear, but two will be given space here, for both reach the spot, as people say. If they will not overcome it, one can hardly say what will. One is mental and spiritual in nature, while the other is a matter of practical action.

First let us interject an observation that should not be overlooked. Fear can never be overcome by nursing it. That is the only alleged cure some people ever

apply, but it is futile. That can only make it worse, and is probably the reason for many of the cases of overdevelopment of the fear attitude into a fear complex. More of the same thing is never an antidote.

The mental and spiritual way to overcome fear is simply to have enough faith in God and right that there will be no place in your life for fear. We are told on the best authority that God is love. That being the case, He is going to protect and deliver us if we will do our part, and the will of loving fatherhood is always that all good things should be available to his children. To His love, nothing is too good for us, and the slightest evil is too much.

This principle is perfectly sound and workable, provided you can and will apply it, but there's the rub. Getting and keeping faith is a fine and delicate operation, and many people attempt it only to fail. Even after having had demonstrations of God's love and power some find themselves unable to maintain an adequate faith or to generate it again. That is most unfortunate, but it is a real difficulty.

Fortunately if the first plan fails either at first or later, there is another way that requires no such delicate adjustment. It is something anyone can do because it depends on nothing but one's self. It is a plan that is sure sooner or later, to bring a demonstration of the way we are led and preserved. It is purely a demonstration by test, so we must initiate it ourselves. Here it is, -

Assume all that faith assumes in your actions. Live as though you had it. Express no doubt by word or act. Express faith instead. Do this, no matter whether you feel it or not, and keep it up till it has had time to work an inner change. Express your desires to God and then back them up a hundred percent. You cannot run from things anyway, so face them. You will be surprised at what happens if you are faithful.

Whatever is the nature of that something that makes you avoid opportunity and neglect duty, fling it off and go on. It may pursue you and get in your way again but it will do so more and more weakly till it dies. Meanwhile you will have found that there never were any real barriers between you and your good, or anything that had real value for you.

Do this and keep doing it, and you will soon have plenty of faith, all backed by evidence. Then because you have that faith you will want to keep going on. This is an effective formula that anyone can follow. Eventually, why not now?

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THREE ECHOES

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THREE echoes keep coming back through the vanished years to me, each expressing something about this matter of fear and of overcoming it. They sound and resound, and they have helped many times to sustain me on the way. On these pages it is undertaken to pass them on to you.

The first is the voice of Jesus of Galilee. His mission was nearly over. It was the Thursday night before the Friday on which he was to die. He was saying some farewell things to his closest associates and friends, gentle, meaningful, encouraging things, such as people try to say from the edge of the shadowed valley. Among them was this, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

He had often said similar things to them before. "Fear not" were familiar words of his lips. He had repeatedly shown these men that he himself had no fear. They had seen and dimly understood that this was one of the great secrets of his life. It can also be that of yours.

The second is the challenge rising from the long silent page of an old letter of hope and instruction written by the Apostle Paul to one of his many groups of Christian friends. He was beseeching them, with all the real dangers that lurked about them in an age of obscurity and persecution, to love instead of fearing. The reason he gave was that "perfect love casteth out fear". By the principles of word structure the word perfect means genuine or real. True love, then, casts out fear, was his claim, and the list of the sufferings and persecutions he endured with unflinching courage would indicate that he knew whereof he wrote.

We do not fear what we love, and we do not fear anything when God's love is ours to make us strong and courageous. The way of love just doesn't run anywhere near where the path of fear does. There is nothing temporary about what this formula guarantees either. Love does not sustain for any given period of time. It is an immortal thing. Nothing has ever been able to destroy it. Therefore, whatever it guarantees is forever.

The third expression comes from lips now silent, but not for so long. It is a sentence from a prayer that fell from the earnest lips of an aged and weary saint in a plain little country church in a far away place and a long ago time. "We thank Thee, our Father, that Thou hast been better to us than our fears", it ran, and the maker of the prayer had tested it all out again and again and knew by experience how true it was.

This prayer grew out of a rugged life that had never had much but God, and that found God enough. You will find those words true also, if you have not done so already. When enough times you have put your complex mental theorizing and your delicate emotional adjustments aside, and just gone forward in trusting faith, you will know beyond all doubting that God is indeed better to us than our fears. This is a practical method. All you have to do is to begin. Do not let fear prevent you from doing it, and thus rob you of your birthright.

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MEDITATION

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HAVE looked into the face of fear, and I understand that it is more a deceit than a reality. When the God of hosts is with me, whom shall I fear? Delivered from this bondage, I propose to move forward, knowing that there is nothing real to turn me back from what is God's will for me.

